



As You Do: Adventures with Evel, Oliver, and the Vice-President of Botswana

Richard Hammond

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As You Do: Adventures with Evel, Oliver, and the Vice-President of Botswana Richard Hammond

The wry, honest and often hilarious chronicles of a very brave and clever TV presenter, Arctic explorer, and general drawer of the Short Straw. Moving quickly on from the devastating crash that nearly killed him he ranges widely over his life and times—a visit to Glastonbury with James May reminds of him of his early years of playing in a band and how and why he never quite made it as a rock star; the stunts and other perils that come his way like the *TopGear* North Pole race (why is it Richard who is out in the howling elements in a dog sled while the others are in the heated cab of an all-terrain vehicle?), Africa where he falls in love with and repatriates a stray car, and the U.S. (once to be chased by rednecks in middle America, the other in pursuit of his hero Evel Knievel); his passion for cars, what he owns and why, and although he loves his wife why it is a toss-up whether he says hello to the wife or the cars first. Balancing home and family with a crazy, peripatetic working life (or not, sometimes), the hamster is well and truly back on the wheel.

As You Do: Adventures with Evel, Oliver, and the Vice-President of Botswana Details

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Kimberley says

Loved it. Interesting to read how Richard felt during the many escapades in this, how he felt awed meeting his childhood hero and his thoughts on Clarkson and May in the challenges, how he misses his family and his devotion to them even when he is on the other side of the world. I laughed and cried and loved every word of it.

Georgie says

Here's another fascinating book from my favourite, Richard Hammond.

Hammond writes with a lot of passion and a lot of dedication; by the end of the book, you feel like you are a close friend and that you were with him on all of his adventures.

Granted, this is not prize winning literature or anything massively profound, but it is a lot of fun.

As You Do includes stories about the 2007 floods, meeting Evel Knievel, meeting and keeping Oscar (the car), and dog-sledding in the Arctic.

Definitely an enjoyable and interesting read.

Laura says

To try and compare this book to his first isn't right..Both books are completely different.

I think fans of Rhichard Hammond and Top Gear will get a kick out of reading this book. There are also some photographs through the book for you to check out.

I found this book a little slow going but again I'd just finished reading his first book so I was trying to adjust. This is more about his life as a TV presenter on TopGear and so. Worth a read if you're a fan..If you don't know who he is then you might find it a little dull.

Iamshadow says

While not as polished and cohesive as his previous book, On The Edge, Richard Hammond has nonetheless written a pleasant and enjoyable account of some of his adventures over the last year. I was a little disappointed that despite the subtitle, the section on Botswana is only nineteen pages long, whereas the Polar Challenge section (which isn't mentioned in the title) is significantly larger. I know that this is likely the result of marketing spin, as subheadings are often decided on by the publishers, not the authors themselves.

Sam Still Reading says

When I first started to read this I thought, oh no. Richard Hammond writes like he talks, non stop and with thirteen thousand commas in each sentence. He either improved or I stopped noticing it when I had read 30 or so pages.

This book covers some of the situations, stunts and adventures during a year- going to the North Pole, driving a Hilux across the English Channel, coping with the English floods of 2007, driving across Africa in Oliver and meeting his boyhood hero.

I don't think the North Pole adventure should have been first- I found it a bit boring and hard to get into. Possibly this is because I haven't seen this Top Gear episode.

This is a very light read and serious Top Gear fans will enjoy it. It may be difficult to truly appreciate this book if you're not interested in Top Gear.

Brian DiMatta says

I wouldn't mind if there were more books like this! It's a quick little look behind the scenes of the life of a well beloved Television presenter. It's not the usual dull babbling about "So I got to work with so-and-so and they were so nice in person!" And it's not a tabloid-sleazy-tell-all sort of book. Instead it's "I went and did a few things, some of which people enjoyed watching. Here's more information about what happened, how we did what we did, and what I learned from it."

I picked the book up in the first place as a big fan of the UK Top Gear, and appreciate additional insight into how they prepare what they do, how they shoot it, and what sort of things don't make it on camera. But his stories about the 2007 floods were also quite interesting.

Now, this isn't for everyone. Richard Hammond's personality is a mixture of classic "Ever so sorry, old chap" politeness and subtle, cheeky mugging at the camera. Also, for the sake of the British reading/TV public he seems to hold the deep seated belief that Americans are often pleasant but not far under the surface bat-**** crazy. Which he manages to support by visiting and filming in places like Reno, "Evel Knievel Days" in Butte, Montana, and the deep south.

But if you like Top Gear, or Hammond himself, or would just like to get a little better understanding of what it took to film a dogsled racing a High Tech SUV to the North Pole, this book is worth a read!

Helene Harrison says

ISBN? - 9780297855200

General Subject/s? - Biography / Top Gear / Cars

Title? - Things that happen in the life of Richard Hammond, that he gets used to.

General Analysis? - This one wasn't as good as *On the Edge*. It was funnier, but I preferred *On the Edge*

because it had such a different tone to what we're used to hearing from Hamster. Some of the incidents described in *As You Do* however were some of my favourite Top Gear episodes ever, so it was interesting to read about them after the fact. Hammond does have a very interesting way of writing that draws the reader in.

Recommend? – Not quite as good as *On the Edge*, but good in a different way.

Jenn says

Hahaha, oh my god, I really, truly, unabashedly loved this. Wee Richard's a great storyteller, and he can turn a surprisingly lovely phrase, and I think this might turn into one of my go-to comfort listens.

Kim says

Behind the scenes of "Top Gear" with my favorite presenter. Definitely fun reading if you're a fan of the show (and it's probably best if you've already seen the two specials - North Pole and Botswana - that he discusses), otherwise you probably won't care.

Neil Frankland says

I like Top gear and I like Richard. He is the glue between Jeremy and James. He provides a sane and down to earth voice compared with Jeremy shouting power! and taking a hammer to everything or James constantly looking into hidden meanings and reasons. Richard even does something I would have done and ran home for his kid when faced with floods. He even comments that have we become so dependent on the things around us that we can't think for ourselves because of the floods. A guy is only 8 miles from home and yet decides to stay with his car, rather than make his own way home under his own steam.

I love his recollection of the top gear polar challenge. He describes Matty as completely nuts yet so much stronger and cleverer than him he still stands in awe. I think it's this attitude that means he ends up running home in the first place. You can see where the seeds of that attitude are sown. The bits about him and Oliver are brief but funny, too brief if you ask me while he understandably dwells on his time with Evel Knievel. It reads like he talks and it's all the better for it. If I have one gripe it's this, If you can get a book deal and be able to employ people to help you with it, why are there so many typo's? It's a small gripe but a relevant one nonetheless.

Angela Hills says

Now, I love Top Gear, so I guess I was destined to enjoy this. I've never had so many laugh out loud moments from a book. Every page had me twittering, then every three or four pages I would embarrass myself with a loud guffaw brought on by Hammond's sarcastic, dry British humor, and the absurd situations he finds himself in: stranded in the middle of an African river standing next to his faithful "Oliver", having polar bear dung flung at him while trying to relieve himself in the Arctic wilderness.

I took off one star because I would have liked more time spent describing the author's time in Africa, but really, I'm just being picky :-)

Andrew Watson says

An interesting look at behind the scenes of a couple of classic Top Gear episodes, and a few other events. Being Richard Hammond, and being written pretty much in the same way he speaks, it was a bit long-winded and all over the place at times, but it was enjoyable enough.

Mark Wilson says

A nice easy and enjoyable read with some great moments that made me laugh out loud to myself as I was reading. Perhaps not quite as good as "On The Edge", but then again, it is a different style of book. Mandatory reading for fans of Top Gear.

Alexandra says

Well after managing to acquire the last section of the book that the audio version leaves out, I can say I enjoyed this immensely.

I know Hammond gets stick for his "stop start narrating style" but he just writes the way he speaks. I don't just find it endearing, I find it makes sense. This man is a television presenter, he is his delivery style. He's not an academic, and he's not even James May.

This book, in it's entirety, is a good enjoyable read. It's a shame he's stayed with team Clarkson, because reading his books it seems like he is so much better than that.

Soho Black says

Whilst he had already gained some attention by hosting Sky One's "Brainiac: Science Abuse" and BBC 2's "Top Gear", what really brought Richard Hammond to the public's attention was a serious crash whilst driving a jet propelled car whilst filming the latter back in 2006. The outpouring of public support, both emotional and financial surprised even him and the book he and his wife Mindy wrote about the accident and his recovery was the best selling non-fiction book of 2007.

Since then, millions have followed his every action. Thanks in part to his affable nature next to the grumpy old men of Jeremy Clarkson and James May, "Top Gear" is BBC 2's most popular show and I find myself wanting him to win every challenge. But not everything that happens makes it onto the screen and his reported 17-mile run home through the floods in Gloucestershire in the summer of 2007 to ensure he was at his daughter's birthday was widely reported as not only a sign of his recovery from the crash but his devotion as a father. Now, in "As You Do", we get to look behind the scenes of some of the stranger "Top Gear" challenges, but also of Hammond's life.

There are five major stories in the book, three dealing with "Top Gear" challenges, one with the 2007 floods and one with another show he recorded. The "Top Gear" challenges are ones any fan may be familiar with; recent ones involving the Polar expedition, the drive across Botswana and trying to build an amphibious vehicle to cross the Channel to France. The others are about the aforementioned story with the floods and meeting one of his idols, Evel Knievel, to film a documentary about his life. If any of these things are new to you, particularly the "Top Gear" ones, this may not be the book for you, as Hammond does assume you're familiar with the show and these challenges in particular.

For any reader, Richard's writing style is very laid back and chatty. Even when he's filming in sub-zero temperatures, he's an incredibly positive person and he looks to wring every single piece of enjoyment he can out of life. When something doesn't go quite so well for him, he sees it as entertainment for the rest of us and has no thought of hiding his own embarrassment by admitting what he may have done wrong. I can't think of many people, even ones who aren't nationally recognised TV presenters, who would admit to being weed on by one husky before being dragged through several piles of dog mess by another. Hammond, on the other hand, knows that the kind of people who enjoy "Top Gear" will laugh at a story like this and so he passes it on, unhesitatingly and willingly making himself a source of our amusement.

This makes the whole experience of reading Hammond's books like being in the pub with a mate telling you about something he's just been up to. The whole thing reads as if you've just seen him and said "Hello, mate, not seen you in ages. What have you been up to?" His last book felt the same way, even with the more serious subject matter. Here, where's he off filming and generally having a lot of fun, it's an even more enjoyable read and the tone of his writing fits in beautifully with some of the strange things he's getting up to. I laughed out loud several times whilst reading "As You Do" and it's never at Hammond, always with him.

The major problem with this book is that most of the strange and amusing things he gets up to are generally whilst he's filming some of the challenges for "Top Gear". As a big fan of the show, this didn't present too much of a problem for me, but I can see how it could for other readers. If you're not a big fan of the show, then this book is going to leave you a little confused. Hammond does manage to explain briefly the point of his being in Botswana or the Arctic, but without being a fan of the show and seeing the friendly rivalry they've built up over the years, it's difficult for him to explain the relationship they have and why the show and the people are so important to him.

For fans of the man, rather than the show, there are a couple of parts where not being a regular "Top Gear" viewer doesn't matter. Unfortunately, these come quite late in the book and whilst they give a little more of an insight into the man that Hammond is, there's little in comparison to his "Top Gear" musings and even I, as a fan of the show, would have liked more of this kind of thing. I enjoyed the earlier sections, but having watched "Top Gear" avidly for several years, a lot of what he was talking about was familiar, merely presented from a different angle. It wasn't quite new information, it was just old information presented with a slightly different slant and in the case of the Polar Expedition, which took up three chapters, perhaps a little too much about one thing where a wider range of stories may have been more interesting. There were also points I thought he could have elaborated on, as he mentions spending too much money bringing Oliver home from Botswana, but never told the story of how that came to pass, which I thought would have been interesting to know about.

My being a fan of the man and of his main show helped my enjoyment of the book. Despite the lack of anything especially new, his chatty style made this an incredibly readable and fun experience. However, for anyone who doesn't share the interests that I have, I can see that this would be a patchy and less rewarding experience. This may be worthwhile for the fan, but really only for the dedicated "Top Gear" fan.

This review may also appear, in whole or in part, under my name at any or all of www.ciao.co.uk, www.thebookbag.co.uk, www.goodreads.com, www.amazon.co.uk and www.dooyoo.co.uk
